



Natalia Alward <alwardn@graffton-ma.gov>

[Town of Grafton MA] 244 Worcester Street (Sent by Amy Thornton, cabthor@aol.com)

1 message

Contact form at Town of Grafton MA <cmsmailer@civicplus.com>

Fri, Mar 18, 2022 at 10:32 AM

Reply-To: cabthor@aol.com

To: Planning Department <planningdept@graffton-ma.gov>

Hello Planning Department,

Amy Thornton (cabthor@aol.com) has sent you a message via your contact form (<https://www.graffton-ma.gov/user/14766/contact>) at Town of Grafton MA.

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Message:

Dear members of the Planning Board, Select Board and Town Planner:

We are writing to state our objection to the proposed distribution center at 244 Worcester Street. As stated during planning board discussions, there are multiple reasons this development should not be approved. Simply put, this distribution center is not compatible with the Town of Grafton.

Traffic, air pollution (from emissions of the 200+ tractor trailers), noise and light pollution are all of major concern to the abutting neighborhoods.

Many of the 109 abutters, and multiple people throughout Town have stated their objections/concerns to the project. However, not 1 person has come to the meetings stating they are in favor of this development. We have been unable to get any information from the town how this would be a positive for Grafton. Attorney Donahue did provide a basic cost "benefit". We don't feel this little benefit outweighs the multiple issues we have raised.

In the event this project passes, we are requesting the following conditions be included in the decision, and that we, as abutters, are allowed to provide input and review the decision before it is finalized:

1. Limited hours of operation. We are proposing 7am-7pm, M-F. This proposal is 24/7. That is unacceptable being 150 feet from multiple neighborhoods. Cumberland Farms' hours were restricted upon opening. We see no reason why this facility would be any different.
2. Plantings along Maplewood median. We would like to see an updated proposal of this and be allowed input before approval. In addition, any plantings along this strip should be held to the standard listed in the landscape design, specifically being monitored and replaced if they die.
3. No sidewalk on Maplewood. As stated in the February Planning Board Meeting, if a sidewalk is put on Maplewood, a significant amount of that median will be used. Considering this would be the only buffer between 200+ tractor trailers a day; we are requesting that none of this grassy area be removed. The Town owns this property, so that should not be a problem.
4. Heavy vehicle traffic clarification. In regard to mandating heavy vehicle traffic enters and exits from Exit 11 of the Pike - it was noted that heavy vehicle is one with more than 4 wheels on the ground. If this turns into a fulfillment warehouse, those vans only have 4 wheels on the ground. The language should remove 'heavy vehicle' and be worded to be 'all non-employee vehicle traffic'. Additionally, write in what the consequence(s) to the tenant(s) will be if the traffic is not routing towards the Pike.
5. Nighttime lighting. We are requesting that the lighting on the building be dimmed at night. 320,000+ size building will create a huge amount of ambient lighting. Again, this distribution center is 150 feet from multiple neighborhoods. Lighting should be less in the nighttime hours so that nearby homes aren't affected.

We know that the Town Planner has had multiple meetings with Wyman Gordon and developer/Attorney Donahue. None of the abutters have had any such courtesy. For the past 6 months we have been speaking at the public hearings about our concerns. In the draft decision, none of our concerns were included – NONE.

It is our impression that elected and appointed Town officials should be working for the people of Grafton and be more interested in making Grafton a better place to live/work, not in what a developer thinks or wants. We were told "the developer is not on board with that" when we asked about limited hours. This humongous facility is 150 feet from multiple neighborhoods. WHO is looking out for us?

Many of the abutters have lived in Grafton for decades, as our Town is a desirable place to live. We boast "New England quaintness", quality schools and businesses, and a strong sense of small-town community. People want to live here because we don't have big businesses. The passing of this proposal is detrimental to Grafton and will diminish quality of life for not only the residents in this section of Town – but anyone who uses Worcester Street or patronizes the business there.

Over 30 business and 9 neighborhoods are on a one mile stretch of Worcester Street. Constructing a massive distribution center is not compatible with the neighborhoods, or the many small (local run) businesses trying to be good partners with the Town and make a living.

Please do the right thing and work with the community, especially the abutting businesses and neighborhoods, to minimize the negative effect of this distribution center on our Town if approved.

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